Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A control messaging system comprising:

~~means to connect~~ an optical cable which is connected to a multi-service platform (MSP) at one end and is connected to a connecter at the other end, said multi-service platform having a first controller, said connector having a cross-connect ~~at the other~~ and a second controller;

within said optical cable, a number of optical fibres assigned for the transmission of data, at least one of said optical fibres being assigned for ~~used~~ use as a provisioning data path;

an Operations, Administration[[,]], Maintenance and Provisioning (OAM&P) subsystem connected to said provisioning data path ~~at said cross-connect~~ through said connector;

~~means to signal~~ said first controller signaling a source identity to said OAM&P subsystem over said provisioning data path ~~from said multi-service platform~~; and

~~means to signal~~ said second controller signaling a destination identity to said OAM&P subsystem from said cross-connect.

2. (Original) A system as in claim 1 wherein said provisioning data path is provided as an additional optical fibre within said optical cable.

3. (Original) A system as in claim 1 wherein said provisioning data path is provided as an additional 'colour' on a fibre used for the transmission of data.

4. (Original) A system as in claim 1 wherein said provisioning data path is provided as an electrical circuit within said optical cable.

5. (Currently Amended) A system as in claim 1 wherein ~~a means is provided to signal~~ said first controller signals, at the time of logical provisioning, from said multi-service platform, over said provisioning data path to said OAM&P subsystem, the bit-rate and protocol to be used.

6. (Currently Amended) A method of provisioning a system comprising the steps of;

~~starting a process at a first entry;~~

plugging in [[a]] an optical cable to a connecter having a cross-connect, viz. the

destination, and a multi-service platform, viz. the source, said optical cable having a number of optical fibres assigned for the transmission of data, at least one of said optical fibres being uniquely assigned for use as a provisioning data path;

forwarding the destination identity from said cross-connect to an [[o]]Operations, [[a]]Administration, [[m]]Maintenance and [[p]]Provisioning (OAM&P) subsystem; and

forwarding the source identity from said multi-service platform to ~~an~~ said ~~operations, administration, maintenance and provisioning~~ OAM&P subsystem over a said uniquely assigned provisioning data path within said optical cable.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein said provisioning data path is provided as an additional optical fibre within said optical cable.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein said provisioning data path is provided as an additional 'colour' on a fibre used for the transmission of data.

9. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein said provisioning data path is provided as an electrical circuit within said optical cable.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6 ~~wherein the last of said forwarding steps is followed by the step of~~ further comprising the step of transferring source parameters~~, such as bit rate and protocol,~~ to said ~~operations, administration, maintenance and provisioning~~ OAM&P subsystem over said uniquely assigned path within said optical cable after the forwarding steps.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein said source parameters are selected from a group consisting of bit-rate and protocol.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6 ~~wherein the last of said forwarding steps is followed by~~ further comprising the steps of:

~~starting a process at a second entry~~

checking whether a physical connection exists; and

if said physical connection exists, transferring source parameters to said ~~operations, administration, maintenance and provisioning~~ OAM&P subsystem over said uniquely assigned path within said optical cable ~~or bundle~~ without performing the forwarding steps.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein said source parameters are selected from a group consisting of bit-rate and protocol.